

EVALUATIONS OF BEHAVIOR

- 121 The evaluation of individual behavior is related to role categories, but is not circumscribed by them. Some behavior is universally prescribed, and judgments include all categories of people. This is particularly notable in behavior related to the moral code. Etiquette requires an ability to respond appropriately not only to individual "others" in a setting, but to a plurality of "others" categorized in special roles. This ability to respond to others in a setting and to anticipate what their responses will be has been characterized as "complex syntactic behavior" by Hebb and Thompson (1954). Analysis of complex syntactic behavior must go beyond the summation of dyadic interaction within role sets to exploring the shared values and norms on which judgments are made and expectations predicated.

Judgments of behavior are cast in terms of (1) morality, or the acceptance of prescribed behavior, (2) etiquette, or the acceptance of preferred actions, and (3) competence, or the effectiveness of performance. In gossip, in court cases, in allocating roles of responsibility, in judging professional competence, the assessment of a person is made with reference to his action in past incidents. A person is what he does, and the evaluation of a person's repetitive acts (called *yobra* incorporating the Spanish loan word *obra* and the Tzeltal possessive form *y*) encompasses a personal history.

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• 577 *Morality.* Judgments concerning the moral value of a person are summarized in terms of states of the heart. A person who behaves well is said to be of "very good heart" in contrast to someone of "another heart." A good man is "one-hearted" if he takes other people into account. The description may be put in the negative, as "one who does not know how to seek disputes." The expression "two-hearted" is comparable to what English speakers mean by "two-faced."

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626 Violations of the moral code are differentiated from violations of the code of convention or etiquette in that the former are said to indicate lack of fear and the latter are said to indicate lack of shame. These two definitions of social transgression point to the major socializing technique of the community: promoting a sense of shame and fear.

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The following list of moral transgressions is roughly ordered in terms of the egregiousness of the crime: witchcraft, theft of cattle, theft of corn, "talking with" a woman (this is a euphemism for having an affair), having more than one wife, killing, and disrespect to parents. There is a fair amount of consistency in the rank order given by different informants. Of five people questioned, all ranked witchcraft first, and theft, without qualification as to what was stolen, second. Subjects questioned differentiated the crime of "talking with" a woman according to the status of the woman—it was worse to have relations with a married woman than with an unmarried girl or with a widow. Killing was listed late or not at all by some because it is assumed that the killer has cause unless the contrary is proved. The dead man is referred to as the guilty one. It is considered worse to kill a consanguineous relative than an affinal relative or a nonrelative. One man remarking on an incident in which a person lost his bull said: "It was a punishment of God for killing his father. If it had been his stepfather, it would be different." Wanton killing is said to be absent in the pueblo, and something that the kurik of the colonias do. The three murders in the past ten years resulting from barroom brawls between "friends" have not dispelled this notion.

Disrespect shown to parents is considered a serious violation of morality. A boy who refuses to listen to his father cannot expect to receive the protection and support of his parents, usually offered a child throughout their lifetime, or of the community. If the son abuses his father verbally or physically in public, the father is supported in whatever action he takes. One father, whose son kicked him in one of the local bars, drew applause when he made the sign of the cross in two deep gashes with his machete on his son's forehead. To beat one's father or mother is a great sin, but to beat one's wife is tolerated, particularly if it is done in drunkenness. If a man other than the husband beats a woman for any cause, she may reciprocate by beating him in court "before the eyes of the judges." One woman who was awarded this privilege when her husband's brother beat her said, "If he were my own husband, it would be all right for him to beat me."

The good man is "of one heart" and reveals it by his humility ("very soft heart"). The rules for demonstrating this are given by an old man who is frequently asked to be a nakawane in his section of the dual divi-

577 sion: "I pay respect to my elders. I greet my brothers and my children [ex-
887 tension of kinship terms]. To all I give respect. Thus I fare well. I have
not been killed, nor have I been sick."

577 A good man is a generous host, expressed in the phrase, "he gives many
[574 tortillas." He serves his community in public office but avoids the appear-
[96] ance of seeking power or self-aggrandizement. When he gives orders, it is
[576] in a soft, low tone, supplicating rather than ordering with the phrase, "If
you would please lend a hand." He gives thanks readily for any service
rendered both to God and to his fellow man. He avoids any show of
[578] anger, and is always careful to show consideration of others. Those who
are of "another heart" or "two-hearted" are the opposite, seeking disputes,
"thinking small," "being miserly," and of a "very black soul."

[754] The heightened awareness of the state of the heart of others comes from
the ever-present fear of witchcraft. Since the people feel their survival de-
pends upon perception of evil heart before it strikes, they develop an acute
sense of the behavioral clues that indicate its presence.

829 *Conformity and deviance.* Conventional or preferred behavior is
183 characterized as "reasonable." The phrase "7iC rason," to take reason or
[192] understanding, is applied to a child who is expected to have reason at the
[828] age of twelve years or so, as well as to the arrival at agreement of compet-
ing parties, as in the case of betrothal.

Reasonable behavior is any behavior conforming to socially accepted un-
derstandings of what the world is. These include what a person of non-In-
dian culture might characterize as beliefs based on faith. They "know"
[776] that there are hill spirits, wood spirits who cut off people's heads, and men
who transform themselves into animals. Occasionally they subject given
813 understandings to empirical tests: one woman tested the belief that a
[241] woman could rid the milpa of insect pests only by walking through a
[825] planted field wearing a new skirt; she walked through the field wearing
a worn skirt and her belief was confirmed when she found that the insect
pests were not killed but just fled and returned later. Empiricism is not
lacking; the difference between the content of their category of what is ra-
tional or reasonable and ours is based on the premises, not the process of
reasoning.

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old and do not have as much opportunity to project their personalities in larger than life terms. Ladinas of the neighboring towns are given nicknames: Me? Sobol for example, was named for her habit of saying when she was drunk, "No soy bola" (I am not drunk); Me? Č'ič'el, meaning Mother Blood, was applied to a woman who sold blood of slaughtered animals. 157
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Behavior is not believed to be totally dependent on innate traits, and the Indians emphasize the socialization processes. A badly behaved youth was said in court to "behave as though he did not have a mother," and to lack fear of his parents. The sense of shame and fear begin at home, and the community relies on the family to instill these controlling influences on behavior. 861
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NOTIONS OF JUSTICE AND COMPENSATION

Notions of immanent justice, whether acquired from the priest or indigenous beliefs, are peripheral to the morality system. Crimes should be paid for not in suffering, guilt, or remorse, but in fines exacted by the communal authority. Every crime has its price, and most people agree that it is good to be able to pay in money and be exonerated. The scale of values assigned in the fines for crimes is some index to the relative weight given them: 577
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Stealing a bull: 500 to 1,200 pesos, depending on value of bull.

Stealing a turkey: 40 to 70 pesos, depending on value of turkey.

Stealing a horse: 300 to 500 pesos, depending on value of horse. 685

The range of fines for each act of theft indicates that justice is exacted on the basis of market value of the item stolen. The fine for murder is 1,500 to 3,000 pesos or two to eight years in prison when a killer is captured by the federal authorities. Local authorities rarely try to find the killer. In the thirty-seven cases of homicide analyzed in the period from 1938 to 1965 (Table 29), only two resulted in federal action. 682

People express doubt about the priest's warning that those who do evil will reap the wages of sin in this life or the next regardless of whether they are found guilty. The pragmatic basis for this conclusion is revealed 577
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1 (see pp.245-247..Analyst)

- 577 in the following statement by a man who admitted to me that he had
682 killed two men:

The padre said that those who kill will get killed. The one who kills also receives all the guilt of his victim and will have to pay for it in the after-world. But my father said that when he was a policeman, there was a man in Tejonero who killed for nothing when he got drunk. He always carried a knife and would kill anyone around. However, he lived until he was very old. Therefore I do not believe the padre.

- 577 Concern about the afterworld does not act as a deterrent to action in this world.

783 Most men ignore the priest's attempts to persuade them to go to confession. Women, especially the prayer-reciters, confess and take communion. 794 Their confessions, according to the priest, are a recitation of the sins of their husbands or their neighbors.

- 293 Drinking is often given as a defense for failing to meet standards of behavior. While this serves to excuse minor infractions, a man is supposed to be responsible for his actions even when drunk. When one policeman 577 started a fight in public, an elder judge commented to my informant:

Look at that, younger brother! I drink liquor when I am very drunk, but I do not fight either my elders or minors. When I passed as president formerly, I used to enter the cabildo, and I spoke well to the judges even if I was drunk. One time I came to your house very drunk and you were half drunk, but you did not say anything to me, nor did I. You did not fight. Thus I walk well. I never fight, nor have I gone to prison, and it is because I give respect to my elders and to my juniors.

Reflecting on this advice, my informant added:

And so it is with me also. I have drunk a great deal in Ahk'oknantik [the opposite section from where he lives] both at day and at night. Whoever speaks to me tells me to go drink with them a little liquor, and sometimes I give them a drink or I take them where they sell liquor and we drink. But I never fight, and I am able to drink wherever I like.

- 626 The community has developed techniques for compensating failure to 273 meet behavioral norms. The most frequently used is an offering of the 431